



Lytham Town Council

Minutes - Full Council Meeting - Wednesday 29th April 2026

Minutes of the Council Meeting held:
 Wednesday 29th April 2026, at 6.30pm at Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton St, Lytham, FY8 5EP

Present: Councillors Simon Newell (Chair), Edward Cook, Amy Barnes, Hilary Warburton, Anne Aitken, Cath Powell, Kelly Farrington, Mark Bamforth & Suzanne Bramall.

Apologies received: Councillor Brenda Blackshaw

Officers: Clerk / RFO

Members of the Public: 46 members of the public were present. PCSO Gary Hickman was also present and presented an item at the conclusion of the meeting.

No.	Agenda Item
PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
1.	<p>Welcome, introduction, Audio Recording notice and Health & Safety.</p> <p>The Clerk explained that that the meeting was being Audio recorded for the purpose of enabling the effective and accurate completion of the Minutes of the meeting in line with the Council's Policy.</p> <p>The Clerk then read out the following statement on behalf of the Council, the statement was also displayed on the wall via a projector connected to his laptop:</p>

“Good evening. Before the meeting begins, I have been asked by Members to read the following statement on behalf of Lytham Town Council. I am reading this statement in my capacity as Clerk and Proper Officer to the Council. The Council is aware that a number of residents are present this evening with an interest in matters relating to Lytham Voice CIC and ongoing legal proceedings involving Fylde Council. The Council welcomes your attendance and is grateful that so many members of the community take an active interest in local affairs. I must be clear at the outset about what the Council is and is not able to say this evening. The legal proceedings in question are active. Lytham Town Council is not a party to those proceedings. For that reason – and on sound legal advice – it would be inappropriate for the Council to comment on those proceedings, their merits, or the conduct or motivations of any party involved in them. That constraint applies this evening and will apply for as long as those proceedings remain active. Any attempt to draw the Council into debate on the substance of that matter would not be something the Chair is able to permit. The Council wishes to be unequivocal on one point: its silence on this legal matter is not, and should not be read as, endorsement of or agreement with any party's position. The Council has taken no position on these proceedings. On the question of the Council's independence and governance – which has been the subject of public comment in recent days – the Council published a formal statement on 23rd April 2026, copies of which are available this evening and which can be found on the Council's website. I would encourage all those present to read it. In summary: Lytham Town Council is an independent local authority, accountable to the residents of Lytham. Its decisions are taken collectively by elected councillors acting in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders, and the Members' Code of Conduct. The Council is not directed or controlled by any external organisation. The Council now proposes to conduct this evening's meeting in the normal way, addressing the items on the published agenda. Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Council during the public participation section in the usual manner.”

The Clerk also noted PCSO Gary Hickman was in attendance and that he wished to address the audience at the appropriate time.

Statement by the Chair – Councillor Simon Newell

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Chair acknowledged that some members of the public present might feel frustrated by the content of the Clerk's opening statement. He confirmed that the Town Council was not a party to the current legal proceedings and reiterated that he had declared his interests on taking office, including his membership of Lytham Voice CIC. Councillor Newell stated that whilst not acting in his capacity as a Councillor, he would be willing for members of the public who wished to speak with him as a private citizen – in relation to his membership of Lytham Voice CIC – to contact him via his Town Council email address to arrange to do so.

Clerk's Note 01/05/2026: The Clerk acknowledges that the above offer was well intentioned and made in a spirit of openness and transparency. However, the Clerk respectfully recommends that, in order to avoid any potential confusion or misinterpretation regarding the distinction between the Town Council and Lytham Voice CIC as separate organisations, members of the public wishing to contact Councillor Newell in his private capacity in relation to Lytham Voice CIC matters should do so through a Lytham Voice

	<p><i>CIC channel – for example, a Lytham Voice email address or the Lytham Voice Facebook page – rather than through his Town Council email address. The Clerk's recommendation has been communicated to Councillor Newell.</i></p> <p>The Clerk then clarified the evacuation procedure in relation to any fire alarm. He identified that he had received apologies from Councillor Blackshaw, and this was noted, and he confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 9 Members present.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Declarations of Interest and Dispensations</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Councillors that whilst the active legal proceeding was not an agenda item, the public presence at the meeting and correspondence he had received indicated that it would be transparent for all Members to state their Interests at this meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Newell (Chair) - Declared his membership of Lytham Voice in Item 1</p> <p>Cllr Bamforth - Declared that he was an elected Councillor at Fylde Borough Council and was a member of the Licensing Committee. He also declared that he was a member of the national grouping of Independent Councillors.</p> <p>Cllr Warburton - Declared that she was a member of the local Conservative Party.</p> <p>Cllr Bramall - Declared that she was a member of the Fylde Coast Against Sewage group.</p> <p>Cllr Powell - Declared that she was a member of the Community Choir</p> <p>[There was a slight disruption in the members of the public present, and the Chair had to call the room to order]</p> <p>Cllr Farrington - Declared that he was an elected Councillor at Fylde Borough Council where he sits as an Independent Councillor</p> <p>Cllr Cook - Declared that he was a Director of Lytham Voice</p> <p>Cllr Barnes - Declared that she was a member of the Conservative Party and also had a business in Lytham.</p> <p>The Clerk stated that he had no interests in either the items on the agenda nor in the legal proceedings currently active.</p> <p>No dispensations were sought.</p> <p>The Chair then stated, prior to moving to the next item - that as an item of housekeeping, an agenda item was being raised earlier in the order to allow the members of the Lytham St Annes Arts Society who had attended, to be able to speak about the 2026 Art Trail events in the town, and this would be moved to before Item 4 - The Public Participation section</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>To consider and resolve the approval of the minutes for:</p> <p>a) Full meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 25th March 2026 Moved by: Cllr Bamforth. Seconded: Cllr Aitken Decision - Agreed by majority - KF abstained as he was not present at that meeting Decision Item 20/2026</p> <p>b) Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 13th April 2026 Moved by: Cllr Bamforth. Seconded: Cllr Bramall Decision - Agreed by majority - KF abstained as he was not present at that meeting Decision Item 21/2026</p>

<p>13.</p>	<p>c) [Out of agenda sequence] Art Trail 2026. The Council welcomed Maxine Melling, representing the Lytham St Annes Art Society, who addressed the meeting regarding a proposed Arts Trail planned for the town this summer. Maxine explained that the Society had decided this year to organise an Arts Trail through Lytham town centre for the first time. The trail will feature works of art – including paintings and crafts – displayed in the windows of participating shops and cafes, accompanied by a trail leaflet available in both printed and digital formats. The event is designed both to celebrate local art and to generate footfall for town centre businesses, reflecting a collaborative approach between the Art Society and the local business community. In its first year the trail will be kept to a manageable scale, with around seven participating venues. The route will begin at Clifton Square and run along Clifton Street, taking in a number of shops and cafes including Loomloft, finishing at the Art Society's own studio on the opposite side of the street, which will be holding its annual summer exhibition concurrently. Artworks will be available for sale, with participating venues offered a 20% commission on any sales made. Maxine noted that some businesses had indicated they may prefer to direct any commission to a charity of their choice, which the Society was happy to accommodate. Maxine also noted that she had been in contact with Tim Dixon at Fylde Council, who had been helpful in supporting publicity for the event. There was also an opportunity to promote the trail to visitors attending the Ladies Golf Championship at Royal Lytham, offering an added audience of visitors to the town during the event period. The Arts Trail is planned to run from 18th July to 2nd August 2026. Maxine expressed her appreciation for the Council's time and indicated that the Society would welcome any support the Council was able to offer.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Public Participation (Open Forum) (Max 15 minutes, 3 minutes per speaker)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person A spoke as the Chair of the Lytham Business Partnership addressed the Council, noting that she had initially intended to ask a question regarding governance matters but had chosen instead to make a statement on behalf of the Partnership. She observed that there was sometimes confusion on social media between Lytham Town Council and Lytham Voice CIC, and suggested that the Council's statement this evening had been helpful in drawing a clear distinction between the two organisations. On behalf of the Lytham Business Partnership, she expressed strong support for the Town Council and the value it brings to the town, and in particular its support for independent businesses in Lytham. She stated that the Partnership would welcome the Council distancing itself from any unelected body whose actions were perceived as damaging to independent businesses in the town. Her contribution was made as a statement of the Partnership's position rather than as a question requiring a response from the Council. • Person B asked where Lytham Voice CIC got their funding from. The Chair stated that that was not a Town Council matter and could not be answered in this meeting - however if he was contacted separately as a private citizen, he would explain that at a different time. • Person C asked whether Lytham Voice would seek to hold a public meeting of their own. The Clerk stated that that was a matter to be addressed by Lytham Voice itself - and if it would help, he would be happy to seek to share any relevant contact details with the member of the public. The Clerk also clarified that the Declarations of Interest had been made at the start of the meeting and the published Register of Interests was being updated. He stated that it was not his position to speak on behalf of

individual members and their membership of groups but pointed out that if Councillors had not declared membership of Lytham Voice, whereas previously they had, it could be inferred that they were no longer members.

- Person D sought clarification on the nature of the conflict or friction that had been referred to earlier in the meeting, indicating that they were unclear on the background to the matter.
The Clerk, responding on behalf of the Council, set out the sequence of events in factual terms. A planning application had come before the Town Council on 7th January 2026, at which the Council had considered the matter and resolved to object. That representation had entered the planning process in the normal way. Fylde Council's Planning Committee had subsequently met on 21st January 2026 and reached its own decision, as it was fully empowered to do. Following that decision, a separate legal matter had been initiated by Lytham Voice CIC directed towards Fylde Council.
The Clerk emphasised that the Town Council's role in the matter had been limited and completed – it had made a representation on a planning application, as it is entitled to do, and the subsequent proceedings were entirely between other parties. The Clerk noted that some commentary on social media had suggested the Town Council as a body had been involved in the wider dispute and sought to make clear that this was not the case. The Clerk confirmed that relevant documentation was available online for any resident wishing to understand the sequence of events in greater detail.
- Councillor Farrington added to the discussion by way of a procedural clarification, speaking in general terms and without reference to any specific matter currently before the Council.
Councillor Farrington explained that where any Member of the Council had publicly expressed a view or opinion on a matter that subsequently came before the Council for consideration, that Member would be regarded as having predetermined that item. In such circumstances the Member would be required to declare that predetermination, recuse themselves from the discussion, remove themselves from the room, and take no part in any vote on the matter. This process applied to any item of Council business – not solely planning matters.
Councillor Farrington expressed the hope that this explanation would provide residents with some reassurance that robust procedural safeguards exist to protect the integrity of the Council's decision-making going forward.
- Person E asked for clarification on the number of Councillors who were members of Lytham Voice CIC, noting their understanding that five Councillors held such membership and asking whether that remained the case.
The Clerk confirmed that at the time of their appointment, five Councillors had declared an interest as members of Lytham Voice CIC, but that this was no longer the case for all five. The Clerk noted that residents were entitled to draw their own inferences from that and directed Person E to the publicly available Register of Members' Interests, published online in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.
Person E sought further clarification on whether those memberships were still current. The Clerk confirmed that a declaration of interest had been made at the commencement of this evening's meeting and that this would be recorded in the minutes accordingly.
- Person F expressed the view that Councillors who were members of Lytham Voice CIC could not credibly hold both positions simultaneously and questioned how a Councillor could express support for a matter in one context and a different position in another. Whilst this sentiment was shared by a number of members of the public present, there was also an audible and visible rejection of that position from others in attendance, reflecting a range of views among those present.

The Chair acknowledged the concern and noted that a significant source of confusion was the conflation on social media of Lytham Voice CIC and Lytham Town Council as organisations. He offered to meet personally with any resident wishing to discuss the matter further in his capacity as a member of Lytham Voice CIC, and invited those present to share their contact details with him.

Councillor Aitken sought to refocus the discussion, summarising what she understood to be the concern of those present – namely that residents wished the Town Council to reflect the wishes of the community and to support businesses in the town. She emphasised that the Council's support for businesses must be delivered lawfully, fairly, and on an equal footing for every business without exception.

The Clerk intervened on procedural grounds, reminding those present that the Council was not able to discuss the detail of the active legal proceedings, and clarified that this was not intended to stifle debate but reflected a legally cautious position. The Clerk reiterated that the matter was one between an independent organisation and another local authority, and that the Council was not a party to it. When Councillor Newell indicated that he was minded to address the meeting on the nature of judicial review proceedings, the Clerk intervened directly and advised that it would be inappropriate for the Chair to do so in that forum.

- Person A sought clarification that Lytham Town Council and Lytham Voice CIC were entirely separate organisations and asked directly whether the Town Council had in any way commissioned or directed Lytham Voice CIC to act on its behalf, referring in that context to the phrase "unelected henchmen."

The Clerk confirmed unequivocally that the two organisations were entirely separate, directing Person A to the statement published on the Council's website the previous week. The Clerk confirmed that Lytham Town Council is an independent, democratically elected local authority, constitutionally bound and governed by statute, and not controlled by or acting in concert with any external organisation.

The Chair called for order, reminding members of the public that debate must be conducted in a civilised and orderly manner, with contributions made one at a time. He stated that he objected to the use of the phrase "unelected henchmen," noting that this kind of language was unhelpful to constructive debate and reflective of the tone that had characterised some social media commentary on the matter.

The Chair began to address the Council's consideration of the Spago planning application in January as a point relevant to the Council's support for local business but was redirected by Person A who indicated that the matter had already been addressed earlier in the meeting. The Chair accepted that and directed those present to the published minutes of the January extraordinary meeting for further detail, before moving the item forward.

- Person G raised a concern regarding mobile phone network outages experienced during the Lytham Festival, noting that the issue affects an estimated 10,000 residents and approximately 25,000 festival attendees over a seven-day period. Person G explained that during the festival, residents experience a complete loss of mobile connectivity, meaning they are unable to contact the emergency services – including police, ambulance and fire – and that care line devices used by vulnerable residents are also rendered inoperable. Person G noted that the issue had persisted for over six months, that their MP was raising questions at a national level, and that there are government guidelines placing obligations on festival organisers and Fylde Council in relation to large events of this nature. Person G asked that the Town Council raise the matter with Fylde Council as a safeguarding issue,

	<p>and that in the event the problem could not be resolved before this year's festival, residents should at minimum be informed of what to do in an emergency if they are unable to contact the emergency services.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the matter was already on the agenda for the meeting under item 11, and that Councillor Bramwell, the Council's representative on the Festival Residents' Committee, would be providing a report and update at that point. The Chair invited Person G to remain for that item.</p> <p>The Chair also advised that he and Councillor Powell had recently identified a potential solution, having noted coverage in the Sunday Times of a service being trialled by Vodafone and Three whereby festival promoters can purchase additional network capacity – referred to as a network slice – to enhance connectivity in the local area during large events. This approach had been successfully trialled at major music festivals and at the Six Nations rugby championship. The Chair confirmed that this proposal would be put forward by the Council's representative to the festival organisers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair noted that the Town Council's role in relation to the festival is advisory, with Fylde Council holding the primary organising responsibility, but confirmed that steps were being taken to address the issue. <p>The Chair then drew the Public Participation session to a close.</p>
5.	<p>Matters Arising / Action Points from Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Clerk signposted to the specific agenda item number for this meeting.</p>

COMMITTEE REPORTS - RATIFICATION	
6.	<p>Community Grants, Honours & Awards (CGHA) Committee – Inaugural Meeting 22nd April 2026.</p> <p>The Chair introduced this item, explaining to those present the purpose and background of the newly established Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee. He noted that whilst a significant proportion of the Council's precept income is necessarily directed towards the operational costs of running the Council – including staffing, accommodation, equipment and insurance – the Council also has funds available to support community projects and initiatives. The Committee had been established to administer these in a structured and transparent way.</p> <p>The Chair outlined the two principal functions of the Committee. The grants function will enable community organisations and groups to apply for funding towards community projects. The honours and awards function, whilst not yet active, is intended in due course to provide a means of recognising individuals who have made a substantial contribution to the Lytham community through formal nomination, recognition or award.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Committee had held its inaugural meeting on 22nd April 2026, at which the first item of business had been the election of a Committee Chair. He noted that as the formal appointment required ratification by Full Council, he was now inviting the Council to receive and ratify that decision.</p> <p>It was reported that at the inaugural meeting, Councillor Edward Cook had been proposed and seconded as Chair of the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Council was invited to ratify the appointment of Councillor Cook as Chair of the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee.

Moved by: Cllr Warburton. **Seconded:** Cllr Aitken

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 22/2026](#)

Resolved: That the appointment of Councillor Cook as Chair of the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee be ratified.

- 2) The Clerk clarified to the Council that there was a requirement for Council to agree the Terms of Reference for the Committee. The Committee had discussed and considered it and recommended to Council that these be adopted.

Moved by: Cllr Warburton. **Seconded:** Cllr Newell

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 23/2026](#)

Resolved: That the Terms of reference for the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee be ratified.

- 3) Councillor Cook, as Chair of the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee, updated the Council on the two grant applications considered at the Committee's inaugural meeting.

Application LTC-G-(2025_26)-001 – Men's Shed Group, Community Workshop Application

Councillor Cook outlined the application submitted by the Men's Shed Group, a mixed community group which engages with community organisations across the Fylde area, supporting them with manufactured and craft projects. Where funding allows, the Group does not charge for this work, covering its operating costs through weekly subscriptions, annual membership fees, and some sales income. The Group identified materials – including timber, screws, nails and paint – as its most significant ongoing cost. The Group had outlined its programme of community work, which includes making planters, bug houses, bird boxes and hedgehog boxes, carrying out repairs to benches and planters, and undertaking commissioned pieces as requested. The Group's annual estimated materials cost is £3,000, and the application sought a grant of £500 to support these ongoing requirements.

The Clerk confirmed that the Committee had considered the application and had reached a recommendation to award the grant.

Councillor Cook confirmed the Committee's recommendation accordingly.

The Council was invited to ratify the Committee's recommendation.

Moved by: Cllr Bamforth. **Seconded:** Cllr Newell

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 24/2026](#)

Resolved: That a grant of **£500** be awarded to the Men's Shed Group in respect of Application LTC-G-(2025_26)-001.

Application LTC-G-(2025_26)-002 – Friends of Lytham Railway Station

Councillor Cook reported that the second application had been submitted by the Friends of Lytham Railway Station, seeking a grant of £452 towards costs incurred or being incurred by the group.

The Committee had not been able to reach a recommendation at its meeting of 22nd April, as it considered that insufficient detail had been provided in the application to allow a fully informed decision to be made. The Clerk confirmed that following the Committee meeting, correspondence had been sent to the applicant requesting further information.

The Chair of the Council, who had been present at the Committee meeting, emphasised that there was nothing adverse in the Committee's position regarding the Friends of Lytham Railway Station, and that the Council fully endorsed the work the group carries out. The sole reason for deferral was the level of detail provided in the application, and it was anticipated that the matter would be brought back to the Committee the following month once the additional information had been received.

Resolved: That consideration of Application LTC-G-(2025_26)-002 be deferred pending receipt of additional information from the applicant, and that the matter be brought back to the Community Grants, Honours & Awards Committee at its next meeting.

FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & AUDIT

7. Finance Report – Receipts and Payments to Year-End 2025/26

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) presented the written Finance Report showing receipts and payments against budget for the financial year ended 31st March 2026. The Clerk confirmed that the report had been circulated to all Members and published on the Council's website. A bank reconciliation had been completed with no variation, confirming that the accounts accurately reflected the Council's bank position. A comparison of actual versus budgeted figures for the year was included within the report.

The Council was invited to receive the Finance Report. No questions were raised by Members.

Resolved: That the Finance Report for the financial year ended 31st March 2026 be received and noted.

8. Internal Audit – Report and Recommendations (Year-End 2025/26)

The Clerk reported that the Council had submitted to internal audit, conducted by an independent company, as required. The Internal Audit Report had been received and the internal auditor had confirmed compliance with all applicable internal control objectives, with the exception of those not applicable to the Council in its first year of operation, and one area requiring action – namely the assessment of significant risks and the adequacy of arrangements to manage them.

The Clerk presented an action plan prepared in response to the Internal Auditor's findings and recommendations, summarising each point as follows:

The Council had not formally reviewed, updated and approved its risk assessment during the financial year. Whilst a risk assessment had been produced and published online, formal Council approval had not been recorded. This would be remedied at the Annual Council Meeting the following week.

The draft risk assessment did not address the risks of supplier fraud. The Clerk advised that a Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy and a Supplier and Procurement Counter Fraud Policy had been drafted and were presented later in the agenda for adoption.

Additionally, the Council's online banking is conducted through Unity Trust, which automatically verifies bank account details against registered entities. The Clerk committed to undertaking a further due diligence review in August, cross-referencing all suppliers paid during the year against Companies House records.

The internal auditor had noted that the Council's payroll agent was authorised by email and recommended that the Chair be included in that authorisation process. The Clerk advised that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had been updated accordingly, and that Members would be asked to formally reapprove those governance documents at the Annual Council Meeting the following week.

The Council had no adopted Investment Strategy or Treasury Management Strategy. The Clerk advised that both documents had been drafted and were presented for adoption later in the agenda. The Clerk noted that whilst the Council's cash balance had remained

below the £120,000 Financial Services Compensation Scheme threshold in 2025/26, the increased precept and reserve levels in 2026/27 would require funds to be distributed across different banking groups to ensure full protection of public money. The internal auditor had recommended that the Council's working groups should have formal terms of reference. This would be considered at the Annual Council Meeting the following week as part of a review of the Council's committee and working group structures.

The auditor had also noted the requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations for a formal annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. This would be added as an agenda item for the Annual Council Meeting.

The Clerk advised that with the exception of the due diligence review scheduled for August, all actions arising from the Internal Audit would be closed by the Annual Council Meeting the following week.

Councillor Newell, drawing on his legal background, noted that the Council had been required to navigate complex statutory obligations – including the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 – and that these had been addressed fully and competently. He observed that the work undertaken over the Council's first year had established sound legal and practical foundations for the future.

The Council was invited to note the Internal Audit Report and to approve the action plan prepared by the Clerk in response to the auditor's recommendations.

Moved by: Cllr Aitken. **Seconded:** Cllr Powell

Decision - Agreed unanimously **Decision Item 25/2026**

Resolved: That the Internal Audit Report for the financial year ended 31st March 2026 be received and noted, and that the action plan prepared by the Clerk in response to the auditor's recommendations be approved, empowering the Clerk to act upon it accordingly.

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26 – Approval

The Clerk presented the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year ended 31st March 2026, completed under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

a) Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk advised that the Annual Governance Statement had been pre-populated to reflect the findings of the Internal Audit. All governance assertions were recorded as achieved with the exception of two: the maintenance of an adequate system of internal control, and the carrying out of an assessment of risks facing the authority – specifically in relation to supplier fraud. Both exceptions were subject to action plans, with remedial action to be completed at the Annual Council Meeting the following week. The Clerk sought Council approval to submit Section 1 in this form.

Moved by: Cllr Aitken. **Seconded:** Cllr Warburton

Decision - Agreed unanimously **Decision Item 26/2026**

Resolved: That Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 be approved and that the Clerk be authorised to submit the document accordingly.

b) Section 2 – Accounting Statements

The Clerk presented the Accounting Statements for 2025/26, summarising the Council's financial position for the year as follows:

- Prior year income: nil (Council not yet in existence)
- Precept received: £95,875
- Grant received from Fylde Council: £500
- Staff costs: £16,550
- Loan repayments: nil.
- All other payments: £17,311
- Closing balance (including reserves): £62,514
- Fixed assets (computers, signage etc.): £569

Moved by: Cllr Bamforth. **Seconded:** Cllr Cook

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 27/2026](#)

Resolved: That the Accounting Statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2026 be approved and that the Clerk be authorised to submit Section 2 of the AGAR accordingly.

c) **Exercise of Public Rights – Notice and Period**

The Clerk advised that the Council is required by law to provide a 30-working day period during which residents may inspect the Council's accounts and associated documents, and that this period must include the first 10 working days of July 2026. The Clerk proposed that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights run from 3rd June to 14th July 2026. The Clerk confirmed that any resident wishing to inspect the accounts should contact the Clerk to arrange a mutually convenient appointment, and that the required notice would be published on the Council's website and noticeboards the following day subject to Council approval.

Moved by: Cllr Newell. **Seconded:** Cllr Bamforth

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 28/2026](#)

Resolved: That the period for the Exercise of Public Rights be approved as 3rd June to 14th July 2026, and that the Clerk publish the required notices accordingly.

10. To receive, discuss and resolve the adoption of the following Policies.

The Clerk presented the following policies, which had been circulated to Members in draft form and published on the Council's website in draft format, for formal adoption:

- Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2026-27
- Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Supplier and Procurement Counter Fraud Policy
- Document Retention and Disposal Policy

The Clerk noted that these formed part of a wider programme of policy development undertaken during the Council's first year of operation, with a review schedule published on the website to ensure policies are kept current.

Moved by: Cllr Newell. **Seconded:** Cllr Farrington

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 29/2026](#)

Resolved: That the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2026-27, the Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy, the Supplier and Procurement Counter Fraud Policy, and the Document Retention and Disposal Policy be formally adopted, and that the Clerk publish the approved documents accordingly.

Councillor Bramall placed on record her appreciation, on behalf of all Members, for the considerable volume of work undertaken by the Clerk in establishing the Council's policy and governance framework during the Council's first year of operation.

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

11. a) Update on meeting of Lytham Festival Residents' Group, attended by Cllr Bramall

Councillor Bramall reported to the Council on her attendance at a meeting of the Lytham Festival Residents' Group, which meets approximately four times per year, with at least one meeting held in advance of the festival. Representatives of the Festival's senior management team were present at the meeting, including Dan Cuff and Peter Taylor.

Festival Dates and Logistics

Councillor Bramall advised that the festival bill commences on 22nd June 2026, with the pathway on the Green closing on 23rd June. Removal of infrastructure is scheduled for 5th July. Deliveries will pause for the Club Day procession as in previous years, and discussions with Club Day organisers regarding arrangements are ongoing. Site curfew times are 11pm on weekdays and 10:30pm on Sundays, consistent with previous years.

Resident Volunteer Team

A team of volunteer residents will again be available during the Festival to handle queries from residents, by phone and email. Contact details will be published in advance of the Festival. Councillor Bramall noted that in the previous year the volunteer team had handled 296 telephone calls and 182 emails and expressed appreciation for their work in supporting residents and distributing guides and permits ahead of the event.

Festival Satisfaction Survey

Feedback gathered via an internal survey of Festival attendees showed an overall satisfaction rating of 96%, representing a 16% increase on the previous year. Value for money satisfaction stood at 74%, up 58% on the prior year. 52% of respondents reported that the Festival had exceeded their expectations, and 65% indicated they would return subject to the lineup.

Accessibility

The Festival is introducing a new national accessibility card system called Nimbus, designed to make access easier for those with accessibility requirements. Councillor Bramall suggested that any resident with accessibility needs look into the Nimbus scheme in advance of the Festival. A sensory tent will again be provided; last year this attracted 60 British Sign Language and sensory requests,

and this year British Sign Language signers will be on site for the full duration of the Festival. The dedicated disability platform area has seen reduced demand as more visitors are making use of the sensory tent and other accessibility provision.

Security

New anti-terrorism barriers are to be deployed this year, which are faster to install and remove than those used previously, with the aim of improving access and egress for residents and visitors.

Queuing and Catering

In response to feedback regarding queuing at entry points, four additional entry lanes have been added. Catering provision in the VIP garden has been reviewed following previous feedback, with a local operator now providing a proper kitchen and sit-down café area.

Parking

Two designated car parks are provided for Festival staff – one on the Green and one at Lowther Gardens. Staff access these through their accreditation and induction process. Councillor Bramall reported that issues had arisen in the previous year with contractors parking on residential side streets, including Wharton Street and Westfield Street, having apparently been directed to do so by their employers. The Festival organisers had spoken to those contractors directly. A secondary issue had been identified with visitors using Airbnb accommodation in Lytham parking on side streets. The Festival has committed to reinforcing the message about street parking, deploying cones and signage where necessary, and confirming that vehicles parked illegally can and will be removed.

Taxis and Private Hire

Premier Taxis will again operate a dedicated service from Lowther Gardens. Councillor Bramall confirmed that this arrangement is open to all taxi and private hire operators, including Uber, who are encouraged to use Lowther Gardens as the designated pickup and drop-off point.

Street Trading

The issue of unlicensed street traders was raised at the meeting. Councillor Bramall reported that incidents had occurred in previous years and that the Festival organisers, Council officers and police had worked together to address this. Unlicensed traders are removed promptly, as a street trader's licence is required to operate. It was noted that the joint presence of Council officers and police had strengthened the ability to take immediate action, and the situation was reported to be more effectively managed than in earlier years.

Mobile and 5G Connectivity

Dan Cuff provided a detailed update on the ongoing challenge of mobile network connectivity during the Festival. He noted that 5G coverage in Lytham is limited in general, and that the removal of existing WiFi infrastructure in the area had further impacted signal quality. Whilst the Festival organisers had investigated alternative solutions, no satisfactory resolution had yet been identified. Councillor Bramall drew Members' attention to the Vodafone and Three network slicing product, as referenced earlier in the meeting during public participation, whereby Festival promoters can purchase dedicated additional 5G capacity for the duration of an event.

Councillor Bramall proposed that the Council write to Dan Cuff to draw this to his attention and invite a response as to whether this solution had been or could be explored.

Councillor Bramall further proposed that the letter also request that the Town Council be permitted to attend the Festival's multi-agency risk assessment meeting – which is attended by police, fire, ambulance and other partners – with the understanding that the Council would withdraw from any discussion involving sensitive matters such as counter-terrorism arrangements. It was noted that such attendance had been requested previously by Fylde Council, and that it would strengthen the Council's ability to report back to residents on Festival preparedness.

Resolved: That the report from Councillor Bramall be received and noted, and that she write to the Festival's management team to raise the Vodafone/Three network slicing solution as a potential approach to the connectivity issue, and to request that the Town Council be considered for inclusion at future multi-agency risk assessment meetings, with appropriate withdrawal from sensitive agenda items.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

12. Community Engagement Strategy

Councillor Bramall introduced this item, noting that whilst the proposal had only recently been circulated to Members, she felt it was timely and pertinent to consider a structured community engagement strategy for the coming twelve months.

Councillor Bramall reflected on the considerable community engagement activity undertaken during the Council's first year of operation, which had included a successful voluntary night, resident consultations on issues including speeding, parking and Liggard Brook, direct engagement with residents through street visits, distribution of a Christmas newsletter, drop-in sessions, and open access to the Clerk and individual Councillors. She noted, however, that the Council had not always communicated these activities as effectively as it might, and that a formal engagement strategy would help to address this.

Councillor Bramall cited the Town of Culture bid as a recent example where an established engagement strategy would have enabled the Council to mobilise more quickly and effectively, given the short notice involved. She also highlighted the importance of developing a strategy that would support the Council's work towards a Neighbourhood Plan, providing both short and long term consultation frameworks and a structured mechanism for gathering residents' views on an ongoing basis.

Councillor Bramall and the Clerk had recently participated in a webinar focused on digital engagement, which had highlighted a number of tools and approaches that could be incorporated into an engagement strategy to strengthen the Council's digital presence and outreach.

The proposed benefits of a formal community engagement strategy were outlined as including improved decision making, increased trust and transparency, greater civic participation, stronger community relationships, enhanced responsiveness, better resource allocation, regulatory compliance, and – a point Councillor Bramall emphasised particularly strongly – improved reach to underrepresented groups within the community, which she felt had not yet been adequately addressed.

Councillor Bramall proposed that a short-life focus group be established to develop the community engagement strategy, comprising Members of the Council, members of the public, and any individuals with relevant skills or interests who wished to contribute. The aim would be to produce a meaningful and community-led document.

The Clerk confirmed that he would include a community update in the meeting minutes inviting any residents interested in participating in the focus group to make contact via the Clerk's email address or the Council's website contact form.

Moved by: Cllr Bramall. **Seconded:** Cllr Farrington

Decision - Agreed unanimously

[Decision Item 30/2026](#)

Resolved: That a short-life focus group be established to develop a Community Engagement Strategy for Lytham Town Council, to include Members of the Council and members of the public, and that the Clerk publicise the opportunity for community involvement through the Council's usual communications channels.

ENVIRONMENT

13. a) Planters – Clifton Street

Councillor Cath Powell updated the Council on progress regarding the installation of planters on the new lampposts on Clifton Street, in her capacity as a member of the Lytham Public Realm Project Board, which comprises representatives of the Lytham Business Partnership and the Town Council.

Councillor Powell reported that a style of planter had been selected – a two-section hanging basket unit designed to sit on the new lampposts. A quotation had been obtained from Lytham in Bloom's suppliers, with the cost coming in at £34 per unit across 26 lampposts, giving a total estimated cost of £884 for the plants and planting. The suppliers, who are also the growers, had confirmed they would retain the plants in their greenhouse until they were ready for installation, with the target installation date being the first to middle weeks of June, ahead of Club Day.

Councillor Powell noted that given the height of the lampposts – necessary to clear existing signage – trailing plants had been selected to ensure visual impact. Biodiversity considerations were raised by a Member and Councillor Powell confirmed she would look into this with the suppliers.

Two outstanding matters required resolution before a final commitment could be made: the cost and method of installation, for which the Clerk was obtaining a quotation from Blackpool Illuminations, with a further quotation to be sought from Fylde Council; and the arrangements for watering, which was being explored with Fylde Council as Lytham in Bloom did not have the capacity to

take on the additional watering commitment. The units do have integral reservoirs which can be topped up with a wand, which was noted as a practical solution.

Councillor Powell also updated the Council on the lamppost banners, which form part of the wider Public Realm Project rather than being solely a Town Council initiative. Three primary schools in Lytham had been provided with images of the town for pupils to interpret, and the resulting artwork would form the basis of the initial banner designs, manufactured by Links. A figure of approximately £3,000 had been identified within the project budget for the banners. It was noted that the banners would not be in place year-round, as the Christmas lights would occupy the same positions on the lampposts during the festive period. Members discussed the need for a future dedicated conversation about the banner programme – including materials, scheduling, themes, and the potential for sponsorship – once responsibility transferred to the Town Council.

Councillor Powell drew Members' attention to a concern raised regarding the reinstatement of paving slabs following electrical works and the removal of redundant grey posts on Clifton Street. It was noted that replacement slabs of a different shape had been used, creating trip hazards, and that Steve Kyle at Fylde Council had been made aware and was seeking to have the correct slabs reinstated. Members noted that the wider resurfacing of Clifton Street remained a priority, with an estimated **£600,000 still** unspent within the relevant project budget. It was agreed that the Town Council should write to Lancashire County Council on this matter, and that a meeting should be arranged with relevant Fylde Council officers – including potentially with Karen Buckley – to press for the full resurfacing of Clifton Street, particularly in light of the Royal Lytham Ladies Golf Championship in 2028. The Clerk was asked to add this as an agenda item for the next full Council meeting.

Members also raised the cleanliness of the town centre more generally, noting concerns about the condition of street furniture, bins, doorways and footpaths. It was suggested that a coordinated approach involving the Council, Fylde Council and local businesses – including voluntary efforts from business owners – could help address standards. The Clerk noted that Fylde Council holds responsibility for street cleansing and that this could be linked into the proposed correspondence and meetings with Fylde Council officers.

Resolved: That the Clerk obtain quotations for installation and watering of the Clifton Street planters, and report back to enable a final decision to be taken; and that the issue of Clifton Street paving reinstatement and full resurfacing be added to the agenda for the next full Council meeting, with a view to the Council writing to Lancashire County Council and arranging a meeting with relevant Fylde Council officers.

b) Christmas Lights

Councillor Amy Barnes reported on this item on behalf of Councillor Brenda Blackshaw, who was unable to attend the meeting. Councillor Barnes advised that Councillor Blackshaw had met with the Lytham Business Partnership, who had confirmed they were happy for the Town Council to take on responsibility for the Christmas lights – not including the switch-on event, but the lights themselves – with the Business Partnership to be kept informed of progress.

Councillor Barnes reported that a visit had taken place to Blackpool Illuminations' Lightpool facility, attended by Councillor Blackshaw, Councillor Barnes, the Clerk, Suzanne from the Lytham Business Partnership, and Jason from Red Fox / Lytham House. The group had been given a tour of the facility, including workshops where illuminations are designed, manufactured and maintained using 3D printers and other equipment.

Discussions at the visit had focused on what could be achieved in Lytham for the Christmas lights. Options discussed included the installation of decorative panels on the lamppost banner arms – featuring designs such as snowflakes in warm white LEDs – and the extension of lighting to Henry Street and Dickerson Terrace, in which local businesses including Red Fox / Lytham House had expressed an interest. It was confirmed that the existing Christmas lighting arrangements around the Memorial Gardens would continue and that any new provision would be additional to this.

Following the visit, the Clerk, Councillor Barnes and Jason had met with senior representatives from Lightpool, who had recommended column wrap lighting as a preferable alternative to flat panels on banner arms. Column wraps offer the advantage of remaining in place year-round, avoiding the additional cost of removal and reinstallation, and are operated via smartphone allowing themes and colours to be programmed – for example, coordinating with the illumination of Lytham Windmill for community events. A Member noted that column wraps also carry significantly lower wind loading than flat panels, making them a safer product. Lightpool had agreed to produce visual mock-ups of both the panel and column wrap options, along with costings for each, within an estimated two to four week timeframe. This would enable the Council to make a fully informed decision on the most appropriate and cost-effective approach.

The Clerk noted that depending on the total cost, the project may trigger the Council's procurement threshold of £25,000, which would require a formal tendering process. The Clerk also noted that as Lightpool is part of Blackpool Council, there may be an opportunity to structure any engagement as a collaborative local authority partnership arrangement. The Council would be provided with full information on costs and procurement implications before any decision was taken. Members also discussed the possibility of phasing the installation over more than one year if necessary, beginning with Clifton Street and the Square and extending to other streets in subsequent years.

Resolved: That the Council note the update and await the visual mock-ups and costings from Lightpool before making any further decisions; and that the Clerk be mindful of procurement thresholds and advise Members accordingly when the information is received.

c) Heritage and Art Trails into Lytham Town Centre

The Council noted that this item had been addressed in substance through the address given earlier in the meeting by Maxine Melling of the Lytham St Annes Art Society, who had outlined plans for the inaugural Lytham Arts Trail planned for July and August 2026. The Clerk advised that Maxine Melling had been invited to address the Annual Town Meeting on 13th May 2026 to present the Arts Trail to a wider audience. No formal resolution was required at this stage.

d) Benches around Trees – Clifton Street

Councillor Bamforth raised the possibility of installing semi-circular benches around the base of some of the trees on Clifton Street, noting that hardwood construction would significantly extend the lifespan of such benches compared to the softer materials used previously. Councillor Bamforth also suggested that where benches were not appropriate, an alternative approach could be to place stones around the base of the trees with planting around them, which would enhance the street scene and reduce maintenance issues.

Members noted that whilst there was no funding available for a comprehensive pavement scheme at present, interim improvements of this nature could meaningfully enhance the appearance and usability of Clifton Street in the short term. It was observed that if

interim measures could provide five or more years of benefit, this might align with a longer-term project to fully resurface Clifton Street once the necessary funding and political will could be secured.
The item was noted and Members expressed broad support for the concept. It was agreed to give further consideration to options and costs at a future meeting.

e) Refurbishment of Telephone Boxes

The Chair introduced this item, noting that three decommissioned telephone boxes are situated at the Clifton Square end of town and are currently in a poor state of repair. Options under consideration include retention and renovation in their current positions, relocation elsewhere in the town, or repurposing for community uses such as defibrillator housing or a book library. The Chair noted that in their current positions and given that they are no longer used for their original purpose, there were concerns about their potential for antisocial use particularly during evening hours.

As no substantive discussion had taken place and Councillor Blackshaw, who had been due to lead on this item, was unable to attend, it was agreed to defer this item to a future meeting to allow further consideration of the options.

Resolved: That consideration of the telephone box refurbishment item be deferred to a future meeting.

PLANNING & LICENSING

14. Planning Applications and Licensing Matters

a) The Clerk confirmed that no new planning applications had been received for the attention of the Council since the last meeting.

b) Fylde Council Statement of Licensing Policy – Proposed Amendments

The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Chris Hambly, Head of Licensing at Fylde Council, advising that Fylde Council is consulting on proposed amendments to its Statement of Licensing Policy, informed by a cumulative impact assessment. A public consultation is open until 29th May 2026, with a link to the consultation published on the Fylde Council website and included in the agenda papers.

The Clerk advised that individual Members, and the Council as a body, may wish to submit observations. The Clerk noted that given the proximity of the consultation deadline, and with the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for 13th May 2026, it may be possible to seek community perspectives on the licensing policy at that meeting to inform any future Council position. Depending on the views gathered, an additional Council meeting may need to be convened before the consultation closes. Members of the public present were also encouraged to submit their own observations directly via the consultation.

c) Fylde Council Statement of Gambling Policy – Proposed Amendments

The Clerk reported that a similar consultation request had been received from Chris Hambly regarding proposed amendments to Fylde Council's Statement of Gambling Policy. The same approach was proposed – seeking community views at the Annual Town Meeting on 13th May to inform any Council position, with the same consultation deadline of 29th May 2026 applying.

	<p>Both items were received for information at this stage, with no formal Council position yet adopted. Resolved: That the correspondence from Fylde Council's Head of Licensing regarding the proposed amendments to both the Statement of Licensing Policy and the Statement of Gambling Policy be received and noted; that community perspectives on both matters be sought at the Annual Town Meeting on 13th May 2026; and that the Clerk keep Members informed as to whether an additional meeting is required before the consultation deadline of 29th May 2026.</p>
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CORRESPONDENCE

<p>15.</p>	<p>Correspondence The Clerk confirmed that there were no significant items of correspondence received to be notified to Council.</p>
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FORWARD PLANNING

<p>16.</p>	<p>Preparation for Annual Council Meeting – 6th May 2026 The Clerk explained to those present the purpose and legal requirement of the Annual Council Meeting, noting that each year the Council is required by law to reconstitute itself by working through a prescribed set of matters. The outgoing Chair, Councillor Newell, will open the meeting, following which nominations will be sought for the election of a new Chair. The meeting will include a public speaking section as at any ordinary Council meeting.</p> <p>The key business of the Annual Council Meeting will include the election of the Chair of the Council, the election of the Vice-Chair of the Council, the review and re-adoption or amendment of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, a review of delegated authorities and committee appointments, and any other relevant annual Council business including the review of the risk assessment and the system of financial internal control.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the agenda for the Annual Council Meeting would be published imminently. Resolved: That the matters required for the Annual Council Meeting on 6th May 2026 be noted, and that the Clerk publish the agenda accordingly.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Preparation for Annual Town / Parish Meeting – 13th May 2026 The Clerk explained the nature and purpose of the Annual Town Meeting, distinguishing it clearly from the Annual Council Meeting. The Annual Town Meeting is a public meeting hosted by the Council, held under Schedule 12, Part III, paragraph 14 of the Local Government Act 1972. Councillors attend in their capacity as residents rather than as the decision-making body, and the Chair opens the meeting.</p>

	<p>The Clerk described the meeting as an opportunity for the community to speak directly to the Council – to raise issues, identify priorities, and indicate where they would like the Council to focus its work over the coming twelve months. Guest speakers had been invited to address the meeting. Refreshments would be provided.</p> <p>The Clerk noted that resolutions passed at the Annual Town Meeting do not bind the Council but do require the Council to give them proper consideration. Voting rights at the meeting are limited to registered electors of the Lytham ward, though all those connected to the town – including business owners – are welcome to attend and contribute to discussion.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the licensing and gambling policy consultations would be included as a specific item on the Annual Town Meeting agenda, providing an opportunity to gather community perspectives to inform the Council's formal response ahead of the 29th May 2026 deadline.</p> <p>Addendum 01/05/2026: Following feedback received after the meeting; the Annual Town Meeting has been rescheduled from 13th May 2026 to Wednesday 27th May 2026. The Clerk will update all published notices and communications accordingly.</p>
<p>18.</p>	<p>Items for Next Agenda</p> <p>The Clerk noted that the next ordinary Full Council Meeting is scheduled for 10th June 2026, and invited Members to submit items for inclusion on that agenda. The Clerk also noted that depending on the outcome of the Annual Town Meeting and the views gathered on the licensing and gambling policy consultations, an extraordinary meeting may need to be convened prior to the 29th May 2026 consultation deadline.</p> <p>The following item was identified for inclusion on the agenda for the next full Council meeting or the Annual Council Meeting as appropriate: correspondence to Lancashire County Council and a meeting with Fylde Council officers regarding the reinstatement and full resurfacing of Clifton Street pavements.</p>
<p>19.</p>	<p>Date, Time & Location of Next Meeting</p> <p>Annual Council Meeting: Wednesday 6th May 2026 6:30pm Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton Street, Lytham, Lancashire, FY8 5EP</p>
<p>20.</p>	<p>Additional item - Lancashire Constabulary's 'In the know' Scheme</p> <p>Note: This item was not Council business. PCSO Gary Hickman attended the meeting and was invited to address those present regarding a Lancashire Constabulary community messaging initiative.</p> <p>PCSO Hickman drew attention to leaflets distributed in the meeting room and provided an overview of Lancashire Constabulary's community messaging service, known locally as 'In The Know'. The service is free of charge and operates entirely via email,</p>

<p>enabling the police to send targeted messages to subscribers about matters relevant to their area – including crime alerts, good news stories such as drug raids and arrests, and community safety information.</p> <p>PCSO Hickman noted that the scheme had originally been trialled by Surrey Police and subsequently adopted by forces across the country under various names, with Lancashire's version operating as 'In The Know.' The service also enables subscribers to respond to messages and to participate in surveys, the results of which inform local policing priorities. Subscribers are also notified of opportunities to meet their local officers.</p> <p>PCSO Hickman reported that a series of residential burglaries had occurred in the South Parkway area of Lytham in March, noting that a suspect had been apprehended and that no further burglaries of the same nature had been reported since. He confirmed that he would be conducting a leaflet drop to approximately 1,000 properties in the area that weekend, assisted by police cadets, to reassure residents and encourage sign-up to the 'In The Know' service.</p> <p>PCSO Hickman set out the scheme's ambition to achieve a sign-up rate of 15% of residents in each area within one year, and encouraged all those present to sign up – either via the Lancashire Police website or by completing the forms distributed at the meeting – and to encourage neighbours and friends to do the same.</p> <p>The Clerk offered to write to PCSO Hickman's inspector on behalf of the Town Council to formally request that PCSO Hickman produce a short explanatory video about the scheme, which could be shared via the Council's social media channels to encourage wider community sign-up.</p>
<p>Meeting Close 8:18pm</p>

The chair of this meeting believes that the minutes of the meeting of Lytham Town Council held on 29th April 2026 are a correct record and are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.
Chair